



Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**



# CASA

## *CASA of Yavapai County April 2012 Newsletter*

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### **SAVE THE DATE...**

~ April is CHILD ABUSE  
PREVENTION MONTH ~

April is also VOLUNTEER  
APPRECIATION MONTH

April 27, 2012  
CASA Appreciation  
Luncheon  
Mountain Club Clubhouse  
11:00 a.m. ~ 1:30 p.m.

May 11, 2012  
Time for Teens Simulcast  
(Details to follow)

Adoption Day  
June 1, 2012

**Celebration, Gift, and  
Gas Cards  
Available!!!**

,,,see page 10

## *Old Friends and new... Appreciation Days and Adoption Days.*



*"The test of the morality of  
a society is what it does for  
its children"*

*...Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

For more than 23 years CASA Volunteers have been supporting Yavapai County's most vulnerable children. Their unselfish and complete dedication to the children, families, and the court that protects them is incredible. We are so thankful to have wonderful CASAs in Prescott past and present.



# MEMORY LANE.....







# Yavapai CASA Calendar

## April, 2012



M	T	W	T	F
2	3 FDC ~ 2:30	4	5 Baby Case Support meeting 10:00 ~	6 Best for Babies Court Teams meeting 10:00 ~
9 C for K Board Mtg. 4:00	10	11	12 Jane's Case Support, 11:00	13
16	17 FDC ~ 2:30	18 Christa's Case Support, 11:00	19 Time for Teens (monthly meeting) 9:30	20
23	24	25 Christa's Case Support, 11:00	26	27 CASA Appreciation Mountain Club Clubhouse 11:00
30				

### April at a glance ...

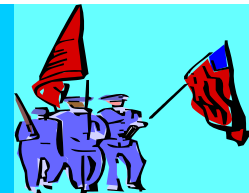
#### April is 'Child Abuse Prevention Month'

- 4/3 & 17 Family Drug Court, Courthouse Division 1 Courtroom, 2:30 ~ 5:00
- 4/5 Baby Case Support meeting, Courthouse, room 307, 10:00
- 4/6 Best for Babies Court Teams meeting, Fair Street, 10:00
- 4/9 C for K Board Meeting, Visiting Center, United Methodist Church 4:00 ~ 5:00
- 4/12 Jane's Case Support, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma, 11:00
- 4/18 Christa's Case Support, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma, 11:00
- 4/19 Time for Teens monthly meeting, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma 9:30 ~ 11:30
- 4/25 Christa's Case Support, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma, 11:00
- 4/27 CASA Appreciation, Mtn. Club Clubhouse, 910 W. Clubhouse Dr., Prescott 11:00 ~ 2:00



# Yavapai CASA Calendar

## May, 2012



M	T	W	T	F
	1 FDC ~ 2:30	2	3 Baby Case Support meeting 10:00 ~ room 307	4 Best for Babies Court Teams meeting 10:00 ~ Fair Street
7	8	9	10 Jane's Case Support, 11:00	11
14 CASA Training, Court Report Writing (refresher) 10:00, Mackin Bldg. C for K Board Mtg. 4:00	15 FDC ~ 2:30	16	17 Time for Teens (monthly meeting) 9:30	18
21	22	23 Christa's Case Support, 11:00	24	25
28 Happy Memorial Day	29	30 Christa's Case Support, 11:00	31	

*May at a glance*

- 5/1 & 5/15 Family Drug Court, Courthouse Division 1 Courtroom, 2:30 ~ 5:00
- 5/3 Baby Case Support meeting, Courthouse, room 307, 10:00
- 5/4 Best for Babies Court Teams meeting, Fair Street, 10:00
- 5/10 Jane's Case Support meeting, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma, 11:00
- 5/14 CASA Training (rescheduled): Court Report Writing (refresher), Mackin Bldg, 10:00 ~ 11:30
- 5/14 C for K Board Meeting, Visiting Center, United Methodist Church, 4:00 ~ 5:00
- 5/17 Time for Teens monthly meeting, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma, 9:30 ~ 11:30
- 5/23 & 5/30 Christa's Case Support, Yavapai Title, 123 N. Montezuma, 11:00
- 5/28 Holiday ~ CASA office closed

# Time for Teens

## Time 4 Teens

Submitted by CASA: Nancy Van der Voort

### Time 4 Teens Meetings

Are you a CASA for a teenager or are you interested in exploring the possibility of becoming a teen's CASA? Or, are you interested in identifying resources and opportunities that may be offered in support of youth who are in their teens and approaching a time when they'll age out of the foster care system? If your answer is yes to any of these questions, we urge you to consider attending one of our meetings. We'd love to see you at a Time 4 Teens meeting or as an on-going member of our group so please come and give it a chance. These meetings provide an opportunity to learn a lot about what other organizations that support our youth offer as well as they have representatives who participate in our meetings.

Time 4 Teens meetings have been changed to the third Thursday of each month from 9:30 – 11:30 AM. Meetings are held in the downtown Yavapai Title Building Conference Room.

### DVD Training Option Availability

Time 4 Teens is attempting to provide DVDs of all conference programs that are offered by this group. DVDs of the February, 2012 conference are now available and include the following topics: Suicide: Who's At Risk?, Gender Identity/LGBTQ, and the Youth Panel composed of youth who have aged out of the foster care system and who offer so much to the audience relative to their experiences. Anyone interested in borrowing a DVD may do so through the CASA office where they are now available for loan.

### May Training Opportunity

Want to learn more about the ILS program for youth transitioning out of the foster care system? We will be offering a program covering this highly important topic on May 11, 2012 (actual time yet to be determined) in both Cottonwood and Prescott at the local Board of Supervisors' Conference rooms. This will be a video conference for a simultaneous experience for participants on both sides of Mingus Mountain. Please, mark your calendars now and watch for future announcements on the Community Counts On-line Calendar as well as CASA program announcements through the CASA office for an actual date and time. Certificates of training hours will be available for those who need them.

### Big Kids Book

Most CASAs are aware of the tremendous resource guide offered in the Big Kids Book and most of us have had copies at one time. If you have ideas for resources which you think should be considered for inclusion in the Big Kids Book, please contact Barbara Polk with that suggestion. Barbara's e-mail address is [polk.barb@gmail.com](mailto:polk.barb@gmail.com)

### Time 4 Teens Structure

Christa Laseter has accepted the responsibility of Chairperson for the Time 4 Teens group and Nancy Van der Voort will serve as her backup should Christa be unavailable.

Questions about Time 4 Teens or suggestions may be mailed to Christa at [lasater.christa@yahoo.com](mailto:lasater.christa@yahoo.com) and to Nancy at [nvandervoort@cableone.net](mailto:nvandervoort@cableone.net).

## Best for Babies

### Best for Babies

Submitted by: Becky Ruffner

When Bonnie Finney's young grandson died from abusive injuries, she decided that she had to do something to awaken the country to the need for preventing child abuse and neglect. So she started a "Blue Ribbon" campaign in her small Virginia town, and now every state in the country celebrates April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Marches, speeches, gardens of bright blue pinwheels, family fun fairs, and many other kinds of celebrations will call attention to protecting children throughout the month.

Here in Arizona, I think of April as a time to take stock of what has been accomplished and how we can do more for kids in the year ahead.

Here's a short list of recent milestones for Arizona children, some for better, some for worse, since last April:

#### **First the far from good news:**

- Arizona has seen a 20% increase in reports to CPS, and a similar increase in children removed from their parents, with fewer foster families willing to care for them.
- Of those children removed from their parents because of maltreatment infants under one year of age are the largest single age group. Of all children in foster care in Arizona as of September, 2011 over 41% had not reached their fifth birthday.
- Seventy children died from maltreatment in Arizona in 2010 – of those 53% were under the age of one year. And local teams determined that 93% of those deaths could have been prevented.
- Although the Governor's Child Safety Task Force was convened and recommendations were produced, few resources, either human or fiscal have been provided to implement the strategies for improving our response to criminal allegations of child maltreatment.

Absent from the report were recommendations for preventing child abuse and neglect.

## Best for Babies ~ continued

### Some good things for Arizona's children:

- Healthy Families along with other home visiting programs are receiving \$34 million over four years from federal Maternal Child Health Bureau. This will significantly increase the number of new at-risk young parents reached by the most effective prevention strategy in our state. Healthy Families has a 20 year track record in Arizona for preventing child abuse and helping parents reach goals in education and employment.
- Arizona birthing hospitals provided the Never Shake a Baby education to more than 35,000 new parents before they went home with their newborns, some of whom will likely cry a lot this year, but are less likely to be shaken.
- Twelve of Arizona's fifteen county Juvenile Courts brought community providers together to improve outcomes for infants and toddlers in foster care. Best for Babies was implemented in Maricopa County a year ago, where over half of young children in foster care statewide are living. Arizona made national history with the establishment of three Baby Courts to assure these young children benefit from increased judicial oversight and more timely forever families.
- Best for Babies will be part of the National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Conference in Washington DC this June, as Arizona has the only Baby CASA program in the country where trained volunteers are the eyes and ears of the Juvenile Court for infants and toddlers in foster care.

Although April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, our children need and deserve your help every day of the year. Please get involved in one of the many ways you can help to prevent child abuse today and every day!



## Coordinator's Corner

*Two new CASA volunteers will soon be taking their first case. Please help us welcome: Nick Vale and Viola Kooiman. The CASA Program would like to extend our greatest appreciation for their willingness to speak for abused and neglected children in court.*

### Information.....

A free webinar telecast (previously recorded and archived) discussing psychotropic medication for children in the child welfare system is available at: <http://www.nrcpfc.org/teleconferences/02-10-10.html>

This website, The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections, has many beneficial resources and areas of information that CASAs and other child welfare professionals will find very useful.

### Warning Signs of Physical Abuse

Most physically abusive parents and caregivers insist that their actions are simply forms of discipline; they feel what they've done is a way to make children learn to behave. However, there's quite a difference between giving an unmanageable child or an upset infant a swat on the backside and twisting the child's arm until it breaks. Physical abuse can include striking a child with the hand, fist or foot or hitting with an object. Abuse is also shaking, burning, pushing, pulling, pinching, biting or throwing a child.

- Unexplained bruises, welts or cuts
- Fearful or shy away from touch
- Clothing may be inappropriate for weather (long sleeved pants and shirt)

### Warning Signs of Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse takes many forms through both words and actions. Words can hurt. If a parent or caregiver is constantly belittling, shaming and humiliating a child, it's abuse. If they are name-calling (including "no good," "worthless," "a mistake"), yelling, threatening, bullying, or withholding love and affection, it's abuse. If a parent or caregiver are ignoring or rejecting a child, or exposing a child to inappropriate situations, actions or behaviors, it's abuse.

- Excessively shy, fearful or afraid of doing something wrong
- Antisocial behavior
- Uncontrolled aggression
- An older child behaving "young"

### Warning Signs of Child Neglect

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, endangering their physical and psychological well-being.

- Consistently dressed inappropriately for the weather
- Ill-fitting, dirty clothes and shoes
- Consistently bad hygiene
- Untreated illness or untreated physical injuries

...this information was taken directly from "Prevent Child Abuse AZ", to learn more go to their website at: [PCAAZ.ORG](http://PCAAZ.ORG).



## Coordinator's Corner

**Happy Birthday!!**

**4/23 Mary Ann Muff**



**“Help all children, at the very least one who may not be your own.”**

**- Marian Wright Edelman**

**~ Training Reminder ~**

All CASAs need 12 hours of in-service training per year. Online trainings with quizzes and certificates are available on the website. You can locate these trainings by going to [www.CASAofYavapaiCounty.org](http://www.CASAofYavapaiCounty.org), click on “Training” and subcategory “In-Service”.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- **Babies (even under 1 year of age) can suffer from depression (and are extremely sensitive to their caregivers depression).**
- **Before a child's first birthday they are already aware that their caregivers have thoughts and feelings different from their own.**
- **A warm, secure caregiver-child relationship is one of the most important predictors of a positive self-concept in preschoolers.**
- **At about 18 months babies can make sense of what they see and start to use the information to solve problems.**
- **Children who grow up in a household where the TV is constantly on (even in the background) have lower literacy scores and do not begin reading as early.**
- **Simply talking to a child (interaction) isn't the most important component to a child's language development.**
- **When both parents are involved in the child's life, the father's vocabulary is a better predictor of verbal competence in a young child.**
- **The way caregivers communicate with their children directly influences how the child's mind develops. When caregivers talk about feelings, children learn how to deal with their own feelings.**
- **Youth with mentors earn higher grades, miss less school and have better relationships with parents.**
- **Youth with mentors are 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol, 52 percent less likely to skip school, and 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs.**
- **Involving youth in community activities creates more effective programs to serve them.**
- **However, only 2 percent of Arizona's youth are currently involved in a formal mentoring relationship.**

## Contact Information

### CASA of Yavapai County

120 S. Cortez, Rm. 402, Prescott, AZ 86303

**WE'RE ON THE  
WEB:**

**[www.CASAofYavapaiCounty.org](http://www.CASAofYavapaiCounty.org)**



If you cannot attend an FCRB, you may e-mail the Board at:  
**[rptfcrb@courts.az.gov](mailto:rptfcrb@courts.az.gov)**

### Yavapai CASA for Kids, Inc.



Serving our Court Protected Children and the CASA Program

Court Appointed Special Advocates

...a child's voice in court

**[www.yavapaicasaforkids.org](http://www.yavapaicasaforkids.org)**

Yavapai CASA for Kids generously donates gift cards (various denominations and designs available) for CASAs to celebrate birthdays, special events, and/or big (or yes, even little) accomplishments with their CASA children. Every foster child can use a little "celebration". In addition, the board provides \$10 gas cards for CASAs that travel long distances to visit their children. Please contact the CASA office for details at 771-3165

### **CASA of Yavapai County**

Phone: 928-771-3165

Fax: 928-771-3387

#### **Camp Verde:**

Maggie Fega, CASA Program Manager  
(928) 554-8900, [mfega@courts.az.gov](mailto:mfega@courts.az.gov)

Mary Underhill, CASA/CIP Support Staff  
Email: [munderhill@courts.az.gov](mailto:munderhill@courts.az.gov)

#### **Prescott:**

Tracy Sauer, CASA/Court Improvement Program (CIP) Coordinator (928) 777-7901  
Email: [tsauer@courts.az.gov](mailto:tsauer@courts.az.gov)

Michele Wade, CASA Coordinator  
Email: [mwade@courts.az.gov](mailto:mwade@courts.az.gov)

Myla Smith, CASA/CIP Support Staff  
Email: [msmith2@courts.az.gov](mailto:msmith2@courts.az.gov)

Lynda Ransom, CASA Support Staff  
Email: [lransom@courts.az.gov](mailto:lransom@courts.az.gov)

Kristen Newman, Family Drug Court Coordinator (928) 771-3398  
Email: [knewman@courts.az.gov](mailto:knewman@courts.az.gov)  
(928) 771-3398

### **Yavapai CASA for Kids, Inc.**

P.O. Box 12457, Prescott, AZ 86304  
(928) 445-0800

**[www.yavapaicasaforkids.org](http://www.yavapaicasaforkids.org)**

### **Board Members:**

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(928) 445-6637

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Family Visiting Center  
(928) 445-0800